

Director of Central Intelligence
Executive for ASM
Dissemination of Intelligence Information

22 July 1948

1. As a result of an effort to establish teletype communications on a 24-hour a day seven days a week basis directly between the research and evaluation activities of CIA and the intelligence agencies of the Department of State, Army, Navy and Air Force, the problems outlined below have developed.

a. In each of the Departments information of intelligence value from foreign fields is received in and distributed by central communications centers and mail rooms. Distribution is apparently through three separate channels:

(1) To Departmental Secretaries and Service Chiefs of Staff on a very restricted basis. No further distribution is made except by direction of senior officials in the offices of the Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff concerned.

(2) To officials charged with operational supervision and action. Such officials apparently have final authority to determine whether further distribution shall be made for intelligence purposes.

(3) To the intelligence agencies of the Departments. In general there are definite indications that this immediate distribution is confined to relatively routine matters.

b. There are definite indications that considerable of the information distributed directly to the offices of Departmental Secretaries, Service Chiefs of Staff and operations officials, which contains information of immediate intelligence importance, is not made available either to the intelligence agencies of the Departments or to CIA.

c. Efforts of CIA to maintain liaison directly with the offices of operations officials to obtain information of intelligence value not made available through intelligence channels have resulted in sharp objections on the part of departmental intelligence agencies.

d. Efforts to obtain sensitive information distributed only to Departmental Secretaries and Service Chiefs of Staff have met with continual failure and also result in objections from Departmental intelligence agencies.

Document No. 069
No Change in Class. ☒
☐ Declassified
Classified to: TS S G
By: 013
NOV 9 1978

e. Among the Departmental intelligence agencies, only the Army maintains an adequate 24 hour a day seven days a week watch officer system for interdepartmental purposes, and only the Army has given enthusiastic support to the plan for interdepartmental direct teletype service between intelligence agencies, which it sponsored.

2. a. It is the opinion of ICAPS, in which I concur, that only strong action on the part of the Director direct with either the individual Departmental Secretaries or the National Security Council will obtain all intelligence information vital to national intelligence for use by CIA immediately upon its receipt.

b. Even though there is reluctance or refusal by such Secretaries to distribute certain information to their Departmental intelligence agencies, it is vital that it come to CIA. In such cases we can observe any restrictions on external distribution which may be considered desirable by the Secretaries.

c. Determination as to what information is or is not of intelligence value to CIA cannot be adequately made except by a CIA representative.

3. a. Par (d), Section 102, National Security Act of 1947, provides as the duty of CIA:

"(1) to advise the National Security Council in matters concerning such intelligence activities of the Government departments and agencies as relate to national security;

"(2) to make recommendations to the National Security Council for the coordination of such intelligence activities of the departments and agencies of the Government as relate to the national security."

b. Par (e), Section 102, National Security Act of 1947, provides that:

"* * * * and such intelligence as relates to the national security and is possessed by such departments and other agencies of the Government, except as hereinafter provided, shall be made available to the Director of Central Intelligence for correlation, evaluation and dissemination." (The exception is FBI).

4. Recommend that the Director recommend to the National Security Council that:

a. CIA be provided immediate distribution of all material received by other government agencies which contains any information of national intelligence value, regardless of internal departmental distribution.

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b. The Director be authorized to designate properly qualified and selected CIA representatives to review the daily intake of all material not disseminated to Departmental intelligence agencies to determine those items which CIA needs to fulfill its mission.

c. Departmental Secretaries be authorized to restrict further dissemination by CIA of material not considered suitable for further dissemination.

d. Instructions be issued to all Departments to maintain full and adequate off-duty hours coverage in their intelligence agencies.

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1. Ltr fr Armstrong/State July 19, 1948 (ER-0382)
2. Memo fr ICAPS 19 July 1948 (ER-0375)

cc: Chief, ICAPS

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Approved For Release 2002/02/12 : CIA-RDP78-04718A000400070085-9

Approved For Release 2002/02/12 : CIA-RDP78-04718A000400070085-9